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CURRENT LITERATURE

MINOR NOTICES

Engler's Syllabus.—The seventh edition of Engler's *Syllabus*¹ had marked a great progress beyond the sixth; 135 pages of text had been added and the usefulness of the book was greatly increased by the introduction of illustrations. No such radical changes were made in favor of the eighth edition, which appeared in the summer of 1919. The number of illustrations remained the same, although some were replaced by new ones, and the text was only increased by 11 pages. A few groups, for instance the gymnosperms, show considerable changes. Here the fossil families have received more attention. The Cycadofilicales, which were not mentioned in the seventh edition, are now discussed. Also the Filicales are rearranged and are now headed by the Marattiales. Comparatively few changes are made in the angiosperms. The chapters on plant classification and the outline of floral regions are rewritten by ENGLER himself, and the new literature finds consideration throughout the book. Probably ENGLER and GILG did the best they could while handicapped by lack of literature from English speaking countries.

The rapid growth of the *Syllabus* from edition to edition has undoubtedly suffered a setback through the war. Nevertheless, the book is still the most convenient outline of the generally accepted system which bears ENGLER'S name, and as a very handy index to his *Natürliche Pflanzenfamilien* it remains indispensable to the student of botany. It might be added that its price for American purchasers is about 150 marks.—A. C. NOÉ.

A dictionary of botany.—SCHNEIDER and LINSBAUER'S² dictionary of botany lists about 7000 technical terms which are accompanied by short definitions and cross-references, or by articles of sometimes considerable length. SCHNEIDER had published the first edition with the help of a large staff of collaborators, and the second edition was left to the care of LINSBAUER, who is HABERLANDT'S successor in Graz (Austria). The text is preceded by a short bibliography of botanical treatises and periodicals. Only German books are listed, and the *Annals of Botany* and the BOTANICAL GAZETTE are the only English and American periodicals which are mentioned. Most illustrations are rather old and well known to all students of botany. Modern plant morphology is largely neglected, except that the embryology

¹ ENGLER, ADOLF, and GILG, ERNST, *Syllabus der Pflanzenfamilien*. 8. Auflage. 8vo. pp. xxxv+395. figs. 457. Berlin. 1919.

² SCHNEIDER, C. K., and LINSBAUER, KARL, *Handwörterbuch der Botanik*. 2. Auflage. 8vo. pp. xxi+824. figs. 396. Leipzig. 1917.

of the gymnosperms and angiosperms contains a few illustrations from articles by CHAMBERLAIN and Miss PACE which had been published in the *BOTANICAL GAZETTE*. The articles on paleobotany were first written by POTONÉ, after whose death they were revised by KUBART in Graz. In these articles the work of SEWARD is never mentioned, and SCOTT is hardly considered. The articles on plant genetics are more up-to-date, and best of all are those on physiology and anatomy.

The lack of knowledge with regard to American and English botanical literature is very pronounced in many German publications. The geologists in Germany know more English because they have to read the publications of the U.S. Geological Survey.—A. C. NOÉ.

Origin and development of Compositae.—SMALL³ has assembled in book form his papers on the origin and development of the Compositae, which appeared in the *New Phytologist* during 1917-1919. It is an application of our knowledge of evolution, heredity, and geographical distribution to the immense amount of material presented by this great family. This study has been carried on for ten years, and "in so far as success has been achieved in the unravelling of the tangled skein of descent of this particularly large group of angiosperms, it is due to the recognition of new criteria and the critical revision of the old criteria."—J. M. C.

Joseph Dalton Hooker.—BOWER⁴ has written a most interesting account of Sir JOSEPH DALTON HOOKER for the series of booklets issued by the "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," under the general title "Pioneers of Progress," and the subtitle "Men of Science." The titles of the brief chapters suggest the contents: Birth and education; Foreign travel; Kew; Authorship; The species question; Personal characteristics; Hooker's position as a man of science. The author and his style form a combination that insures authoritative statements and interesting presentation.—J. M. C.

Flowering plants and ferns.—Under this title WILLIS published the first edition of his manual and dictionary in 1897. A second edition appeared in 1904, a third in 1908, and now a fourth edition has been published.⁵ The purpose is to supply a convenient summary of information about plants, and the result is a very convenient book of reference. The most noteworthy feature of the present edition is the incorporation of all the parts of the earlier editions

³ SMALL, JAMES, The origin and development of the Compositae. pp. xi+334. pls. 6. London: William Wesley & Son. 1919.

⁴ BOWER, F. O., Joseph Dalton Hooker. pp. 57. New York: Macmillan Co. 1919.

⁵ WILLIS, J. C., A dictionary of the flowering plants and ferns. Fourth edition. pp. xii+712+liv. Cambridge: The University Press. 1919. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.